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PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

• *Founded 1915* •

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CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

July 28, 1993, Wednesday at 8:00 P.M.

Counterfeits —Fear and Loathing in Numismatics

SPEAKER: STEPHEN M. HUSTON

August 25, 1993, Wednesday at 8:00 P.M.

Coins of the Bible

SPEAKER: ROGER GRIMES

September 22, 1993, Wednesday at 8:00 P.M.

Annual White Elephant Sale

Everyone should bring their "treasures" and checkbooks.

Monthly meetings are held on the 4TH Wednesday of each month at

The Knights of Columbus Hall in San Francisco

2800 Taraval Avenue (1 BLOCK WEST OF SUNSET). *Guests are invited.*

1993 P.C.N.S. LITERARY AWARDS

The Journal staff thanks everyone who made the 1992/3 Journal possible, especially those who submitted articles.

First Place
Benj Fauver
Collecting Western Exonumia

Second Place
Michael S. Turrini
1946 Iowa Statehood Centennial Commemorative Half Dollar

Third Place
George L. Smyth
Current C Notes / The Lowest Common Denomination

Honorable Mention
Ken Barr
The Syngraphics Scene

Contributing Authors

Stephen M. Huston, David W. Lange, Matthew V. Rockman, and Jerry F. Schimmel

·W·I·N·

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The Coin Cabinet of the British Museum

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COINS AND MEDALS

BY

STEPHEN M. HUSTON

This paper was originally presented as a talk before the PCNS *membership meeting on* April 28, 1993.

Any collection which has been in existence for over 200 years reflects something of the world at the time of the collection's inception. This has been proved true of public and private collections started long ago which have been open to examination in recent years.

An excellent example is the now-famous Garrett Collection of coins from ancient to modern, which included the common and rare from ancient Greek to US issues. Sold during the early 1980s, the US coinage represented one of the most thorough collections ever offered, often in perfect condition. However, many coins obtained in mint condition in older times showed evidence of mishandling. All gentlemen of that day felt free to handle their own coins!

Similarly, the ancient bronze coins in the Garrett Collection, especially Roman bronzes, showed a remarkably high degree of tooling, smoothing of the original surface with tools to create an artificially smooth surface, sometimes with lettering or design detail re-engraved by hand. Some collectors withdraw their bids after examining such lots. The tooling of bronzes was common practice in the 19th century, but is frowned upon if not completely condemned by nearly all modern collectors.

The Garrett Collection benefited by the advantageous times for acquiring now-rare types and varieties, but the method of maintaining the collection took a toll on the contents which the original collectors had never imagined would be of any consequence. In short, for better *and* for worse, it was a product of its times.

THE OLDEST COIN COLLECTION KNOWN

Probably the oldest documented coin collection was found in 1969, buried in Egypt. It contained about 900 archaic-style Greek coins dating before 475 BC when it was buried. It was both the largest hoard of early archaic Greek coins found to-date and the most diverse.

It appears that the merchant who secreted it away nearly 2500 years ago was saving one of every different type of coin which came into his hands—a collector! Of course, there were some duplicates of common types, because, it seems, that the owner was saving what wealth he could afford to set aside, using whatever coins were available, while *also intentionally* placing the best example of each type he found into the group as matter of interest. In some cases, it appears, the only example of a design type which he acquired was seriously damaged, possibly even cut, but it was saved, even though undamaged examples of more common coin types were certainly available.

The resulting hoard/collection provided modern scholars with some of the most significant clues to the chronology and circulation patterns of early Greek coinage ever obtained. This group of coins, the *Asyut Hoard*, could be called the oldest coin collection known, and, despite any lack of organization by the owner, his efforts to save as many different types as possible proved to be the value of the coins to modern scholars.

Much of what we know of archaic Greek coin chronology derives from this find. Its value for study is based on the simple fact that it *was* defined by when and where it was collected. If it had not provided a picture of what could be *obtained in circulation* in that day, it might not have been of any interest to scholars.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM COLLECTION (BMC)

The British Museum was also a product of its times. Established by an Act of Parliament in 1753 approving the funds to purchase the private collections of Sir Hans Sloane, the British Museum *did not plan to have a coin collection*. Sloane, however, *quite naturally*, had a coin collection! Any eighteenth century English gentleman of means owned some old coins. It was almost *de rigueur* that a gentleman of that time collect antiquities, which included coins of the past, preferably as old as possible.

Parliament was made an offer which (we can be thankful) they did not refuse—Sloane's collections in exchange for £20,000 to provide for his heirs. Sloane's desire for England to own his collection caused him to place this relatively inexpensive price on material worth much more even then. England got the collections and Sloane's heirs were well provided for.

When Parliament acquired the Sloane collection, much of what was to become the British Museum was instantly in place, including its fame and location! Sloane had housed much of the collection at Montague House in Bloomsbury, where it had been viewed during Sloane's lifetime by Voltaire, Linneas, Pepys, Benjamin Franklin, and George Frederick Handel, who was probably not asked back after he outraged Sloane by placing a hot muffin on an old and rare book in Sloane's library. Sloane was personal physician to Queen Anne and Pepys, so his offer of the collections to England was probably anticipated.

The site of Montague House included the grounds which hold the modern building of the British Museum. There is an open courtyard in front of the modern building—Montague House stood in that location in 1753.

In addition to Sloane's collection, Parliament had acquired the collections of Sir Robert Cotton. In a day when collections by the nobility were handed down for generations, the acquisition of an old collection such as that of the Cotton family usually meant the acquisition of items which had been interred in the collection for a century, or two or three, already. Cotton died in 1631, leaving the collection to England "for public use and advantage." However, no means of transferring the collection or housing it had been found by 1702, when his heirs tried to present the collection to the Crown. It was on Sloane's death in 1753 that Parliament finally acquired the materials amassed over generations from Cotton's heirs—once it could be housed.

Many coins now part of the British Museum Department of Coins and Medals can be traced to their owners in the 1600-1750 period by the antique and distinctive tags which still sit in the trays with them as placed by owners in those centuries.

Had these coins not been preserved by scholars of that day, they would probably have been lost forever. Coins in silver and gold which were found in past centuries in England and Europe ended up almost invariably in one of two places—the collections of scholarly noblemen *or the melting pots of refiners*, for old coins were precious metals *of no interest* if the nobility would not purchase them for more than bullion value! Many of the great rarities of the British Museum Collection would not exist if the collection had not been started more than 200 years ago.

Tracing the pedigree of coins in the British Museum can be frustrating where the tags are not distinctive in the early acquisitions. No uniform system of recording coins was in use by the museum until the 1840s, and part of these records were destroyed a century later. Another part of the records are recorded in the material in other departments of the museum because there was no separate department for coins and medals until the museum was quite old.

Eighteenth century collectors were *antiquarians* in the most encompassing sense of the word—they acquired old things because they *were* old things. Their collections included coins among their manuscripts and documents because early numismatists *recognized ancient and medieval coins to be documents* issued by the rulers of past times, a view which many modern historians are just now beginning to appreciate. The original collections were arranged with antiquities as part of the printed documents. As the antiquities collections grew in the early 1800s, the antiquities had to be separated from printed documents. The acquisition of Egyptian antiquities from France as part of a peace treaty following the Napoleonic Wars (in which England acquired the Rosetta Stone) and the purchase of the Elgin Marbles several years later required restructuring those departments. Coins, most of the collection being of ancient vintage in the early 1800s, were kept with the Greek and Roman Antiquities until 1860. At that time, the coins were given their own identity as the Department of Coins and Medals.

Sir Hans Sloane as portrayed on a medal by Jean Dassier in the mid-18th Century

Among the noteworthy acquisitions of coins following Cotton and Sloane was the collection of Rev. Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode, valued at £6,000 when bequeathed to the Museum in 1799, it was made up of Roman coins of the finest conditions known. A rough valuation by one of the Keepers of the department in 1976 placed a modern valuation on that group of coins at roughly £6,000,000, and Roman coins in top condition have increased by several times in the years since that *guesstimate* was printed. The Cracherode Collection itself was begun more than 200 years ago.

Not all of the significant parts of the Museum collection represent decades-long work by titled collectors. One of the most historically-significant and valuable parts of the coin department was purchased in 1810 for the then-princely sum £4,000. It is the collection of Anglo-Gallic coinage collected by Barrie Charles Roberts, begun well before he was 16 years of age. He died at age 21 with a collection of such importance that the British Museum published it as its second catalogue just a few years later, giving it precedence over many groups of coins which had been awaiting publication for decades. This collection was built by a young numismatist (who had an indulgent father) in a very short time, yet it is one of the finest groups of coins in the BMC.

MONEY FROM THE BANKS

The famed Sir Joseph Banks, the naturalist to whom much of the British Museum's natural history collections will forever be indebted, was not a dedicated numismatist, but his travels provided the basis for one of the important sections of the Coin and Medal Department. His sister, Miss Sarah Sophia Banks, collected every kind of coin she could obtain. Bank's voyages provided Miss Banks with a steady stream of new issues of modern world coins, especially from the Americas. When her collection was presented the British Museum in 1818, it included the new issues of such young institutions as the new US Mint in Philadelphia, in virtually mint condition, as they had been intentionally acquired *as issued* to add to her world coin collection. Her coins, with pedigrees back to acquisition from mints and notes on obtaining them *in circulation*, provide the British Museum with examples of known authentic coins against which many of the rarities of the Western Hemisphere from the 1700-1810s may be compared.

THE HOBBY OF KINGS

Perhaps the most famous collector to add to the BMC was King George III. While "the colonies" had no love for this noble collector, many Americans are surprised to learn that George endured bad press in Britain as well for nearly 200 years—all for the simple fault of being clinically *mad*. George had to be replaced on the throne by his heir, who was himself considered a bit of a rogue when he wasn't trying to bankrupt the treasury.

King George III was certainly a serious collector, and the British Museum benefited to an extent never before or since equaled. He provided a librarian along with his library, one instructed to be helpful to literary men and to collectors of small means. This royal library is open to students in the British Museum's reading room every day of the week. George's coin collection, in keeping with his times, included the earlier collections of other nobles, scholars, antiquarians and even earlier kings, which had been made available to him during his long reign. The collection of King George III contains some of the finest and rarest items in the museum, including the earliest known gold coin of Charlemagne in choice condition, German Thalers in mint condition from an earlier collection of King George II (his grand-father) and, of course, the more *common* items which were available during his lifetime. This last group includes much coinage of the 1700s, but also examples of *fake* Renaissance medals. These fakes were produced to sell to *tourists* in Europe on their *Grand Tours*. Nowadays, these fakes from the 1700-1800s are often misattributed as authentic because of their *pedigrees*, which normally date back more than a century or two.

It can be a treat to be going through a tray of coins in the British Museum and come upon a specimen with two tags, especially when the older tag in the bottom of the tray carries the *Crowned* GIII mark of the original royal collection.

JUNQUE AND GEMS

One of the colorful collectors who added his share of delights and debris to the collection was Richard Payne Knight (1750-1824). Knight's exceptional taste in obtaining a Dekadrachm of Syracuse signed by the engraver Kimon, was occasionally balanced by his errors in judgment, which are naturally of more interest to the non-specialist. It was Knight who informed Lord Elgin that he had wasted his money and efforts in bringing the Parthenon sculptures out of Greece.

Knight also collected engraved gemstones from antiquity, once a common adjunct to any gentleman's coin cabinet. He knew the engraver Pistrucci who designed the classic St. George and Dragon *motif* used on the new coinage of King George III. Pistrucci found that occasionally his own gem engraving was mistaken for an *ancient* work, and he was

distressed to find the going prices of these to be much higher than he could charge for the work when it was known to be his own. He set out intentionally to make a convincing engraved gemstone which could be mistaken for an ancient piece. The result was a piece known as his *Flora*. Several years after parting with *Flora*, Pistrucci learned that it had been acquired by Knight. Pistrucci informed Knight of the true origin of the piece, but Knight maintained that the *Flora* was an authentic antiquity in the face of this damning evidence. Eventually Pistrucci's *Flora* became part of the Knight bequest to the BMC, along with the authentic Dekadrachm and one of the finest coin collections. This collection prompted the issuance of the first coin catalogue of the British Museum Collections, the Payne Knight Collection.

Additional collections continued to be added to the department's holdings over the years. Most noteworthy for the later part of the 19th century was the Bank of England's collection of mint state coins, moved to the BMC in 1870. Sir John Evans, whose immense coin collection was legendary at the turn of the century, did not bequeath his entire holdings to the museum, but he did what mattered. He provided for the British Museum to select what material was needed from his collections to fill holes in the museum collection. This alone provided a giant step toward a comprehensive collection on entering the twentieth century. His notes include details of the actual find-sites and dates for the specimens in his collection.

The British Museum has sometimes acquired collections which were already well-known in their own fields. One good example was Marsden's collection of some 3,000 coins already described and illustrated in his book *Numismatica Orientalia* (reprinted as revised by Stephen Album in recent years). The line-drawing illustrations were prepared by Marsden's wife, and the book was published before his collection was joined with that of the museum.

Marsden's collection, in the style of his times, had within it the earlier collection of Sir Robert Ainslie, the British Ambassador to Constantinople from 1776 to 1792. The collections of British officials abroad always provided a wealth of material from recent finds in the regions where they were stationed, reflecting what was being unearthed at that place and time better than any other surviving document.

THE MODERN MUSEUM

During World War II, with London under air attack by German rockets, the collections of the British Museum were removed to the countryside for safekeeping. The coins were removed within three days of the 1939 order to evacuate by working around the clock, but the documentation of much of the department was left *in situ* during the air raids. On the night of May 10, 1940, a German incendiary bomb hit the British Museum structure, and the entire on-site contents of the coin department was destroyed in the resulting fire. Rebuilding had to wait for peace, but the museum reopened in 1946 with the coin collections intact.

Modern acquisitions to the coin department are made by purchase, often via *treasure trove* rights, bequests and donations. A donation in 1946 from the Lloyd family provided the museum with 100 ancient Roman gold coins, each and every one of them of the finest known quality! While this may not represent great rarity, it is spectacular and contributes

to the overall impressiveness of this massive and magnificent collection.

Treasure Trove laws in Great Britain provide that any item of precious metal which is found which was intentionally concealed must be offered to the *Crown* for *first refusal.* In practice, this means that any silver or gold coin which is unearthed, especially in a hoard, usually must be offered to the British Museum for purchase before it might be sold privately. The museum benefits by having the opportunity to acquire the numismatic *Fruits of the Earth* found within its national borders.

The Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum now houses more than 600,000 specimens, all of which are available to numismatists for examination and study. The curatorial staff, known as *Keepers of the Coins*, are always pleased to meet fellow numismatists and assist them with research.

Most of the details needed to prepare this history of the collection were obtained with the help of the staff, especially Miss Marion M. Archibald of the coin department, who provided me with information she prepared more than fifteen years ago for a yet-unpublished history of the department. Though I owe her a debt of gratitude for most of the details used as the basis of this short history, I must claim responsibility for any errors which may have crept into this account.

ADVERTISING SCHEDULE

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Quarter Page	4.5 x 1.35	10	30

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BOOK REVIEW BY JERRY F. SCHIMMEL

Tokens of Latin America: A Guide Book and Catalog 1700-1920, 1st Ed. by Russell Rulau, 1992, 413pp, perfect binding. Krause Publications, Iola, Wisconsin, $29.95

Tokens of Latin America is the first mass-marketed volume on exonumia from south of the border. Its extensive listings include the Caribbean series, exclusive of Bermuda. Many tokens described there are new to this writer. A thoughtful introduction should be perused by every reader in the field. The excellent Index will even help to identify pieces not listed. Its good Bibliography compiles the best-known references. The cover is handsome and cheerful. As a catalog it "is intended to identify and value those tokens in the hands of the average collector, and to reveal the historical setting for their existence." For any collector of *Caribbeana* and *Latin-Americana* this is a "do purchase" item.

Its publisher has a nearly unequalled sales distribution network in the numismatic field, so that Russell Rulau's effort will get worldwide attention and no doubt set a standard for future publications in the field. With this in mind some problems appear in sharp relief that would not ordinarily be important in a work intended for a small audience.

Rulau intends the catalog to assist "the average collector," but many of the tokens he lists will never be seen by that person or even anyone more advanced. This is largely true of those pieces he lists as "classic," especially the Mexican *tlacos* shown on pages 17 and 18 and those early tokens of the Dutch and French Caribbean islands. The latter are virtually unknown except from illustrations. For the most part, however Rulau succeeds with his purpose.

The encyclopedic purview is both the volume's strength and its drawback. Here again the Mexico section deserves attention. Tokens from that country compare in volume and variety to those of major European countries. Rulau's listings are broadly representative enough, but they would be analogous to publishing a catalog on U.S. tokens which includes some colonial, some Hard Times, a few Civil War and a number of late 19th Century issues. Mexico's important sub-grouping do not stand out in this compilation. The well-known series like those from the Yucatan Peninsula or the 19th Century municipals are scattered into individual state listings. This is a logical, but not always helpful arrangement in a work intended as a sampler. Rulau's personal sympathy is obviously with the small collector and he meticulously lists and identifies the fakes and fantasies. However, for best effect they should have been placed in a separate section for ready identification.

There will always be attribution problems with tokens. This is especially true of Latin-America where few pieces have any town or other political subdivision name in their legends. On the whole attributions are accurate, but like any new token work there are errors sprinkled throughout the volume which will be cleared up with time. Two glaring examples stand out because they are the only entries for their countries. The most dubious is that for Dominica. Specimens of that token and a "20" denomination are known in Venezuela and collected there as local issues. Rulau provides no documentation for his attribution and the former should have stayed on the mavericks list. The same goes for Grenada. Its token is certain to be a stock machine piece used at a number of sites and over a wide geographical area. The question about Mexico's common Las Palmas series might have been avoided if the

author had access to the recent work by Claudio Verrey C., FICHAS DE LAS FINCAS CAFETALERAS DE CHIAPAS (1988). Other works by Verrey should be included in later bibliographies like FICHAS DE SONORA (1990) and MONEDAS MUNICIPALES Y PARTICULARES DE SAN LUIS POTOSI (1988). The small work by Hal Birt, TOKENS AND MEDALS OF SONORA, MEXICO (1990), should be added as well.

Prices given can only be estimates in a field with no market structure like Latin-American tokens. Rulau's err on the high side. On the other hand he has done collectors a great service by announcing the presence of a hoard of Chilean hard rubber pieces now offered for sale in part by practically every dealer in the country. Rumor has it that they arrived in a barrel. In the past decade other lots have come to the U.S., most notably from Costa Rica, El Salvador and Uruguay. Smaller groups of Jamaica banana tallies have recently become available as well. Consequently, price estimates for these countries are much too high. Many of Mexico's crudely-struck pieces, those issued from colonial times to the mid-19th Century, are not often available except in lower grades. Grading standards for the latter will require years to establish, if it can be done at all.

The most serious problem with the book is its cluttered layout. The varying-size titles for issuer names, national subdivisions and localities are much too large and of secondary interest. Token descriptions and commentaries, the heart of any catalog, are tiny, seemingly unimportant. The impression made is that the book has been puffed up or padded. Smaller typeface and blank space would have created the opposite effect. As time passes the jumble of titles will just be something to put up with. Frank Grove's THE TOKENS OF MEXICO (1989) does a better job of presenting the Mexican series in a manner visually easy to follow, although that work has its own problems.

As a researcher Rulau demonstrates his long years of experience and consummate skill. As a compiler and expository writer he is highly idiosyncratic. He is not alone. All token cataloguers share that trait to one degree or another. It is the state of the art. Rulau's selection of catalog entries and comments at times seem inspired by a personal muse rather than some overall design. At other times he falls victim to the book's layout. The latter reinforces the feeling of capriciousness in relation to his selection of entries. When Rulau started writing years ago, little was known about tokens. He developed a chatty informal style characterized by a mix of documentation and personal impressions. It worked well with a small group of enthusiasts. His style has not changed. This time he stands before the world.

There are several catalog models that might be considered in preparing future editions. The AVA'S CATALOGUE OF UNITED STATES AND CANADIAN TRANSPORTATION TOKENS has provided a universally accepted shorthand style for as long as Rulau has been a researcher. Bob Lyall's work THE TOKENS, CHECKS, METALLIC TICKETS, PASSES AND TALLIES OF THE BRITISH CARIBBEAN & BERMUDA (TAMS 1988) uses an historical analysis style based on that developed by Major Fred Pridmore. Rulau's style is neither, but more like the latter. In order to follow Lyall's method many of Rulau's personal impressions and parenthetical comments will have to be closely edited and the documentation tightened.

The art of compiling token catalogs is not the same as that for coins. Generally accepted standards as those employed for coins may never be developed. LATIN-AMERICAN TOKENS for all it has accomplished is good and useful, but many of us will look forward to something done with more care and higher standards.

British Campaign Medals of the Great War

by Matthew V. Rockman

The great war ranks second only to WWII as the most bloody and costly war in the history of humankind. Four years of fighting from the flooded trenches to the raging seas cost the world more than eight million lives, almost a million of them British. These are the medals that the lucky survivors received, and the casualties' next-of-kin treasured in scrapbooks. They are arranged here in the order they were to be worn.

The 1914 Star

This award was sanctioned in 1917 by an army order which announced that the King was "pleased to signify his pleasure to recognize by the grant of a distinctive decoration, the services rendered by the military forces under the command of Field-Marshal Lord French, in France and Belgium in the early phase of the war in 1914."[1]

The star was awarded to those who served in France or Belgium between August 5 and midnight of November 22/3, 1914. The civilian medical practitioners and nurses who served with the British Expeditionary Force were among the 378,000 recipients of the award.

The star is made of lacquered bronze and has three points, the fourth ending in the imperial crown and a half-inch suspension ring. The entire piece is a solid stamping, 63mm in height, 45mm in width. There are two crossed swords on the star with the points and hilts protruding. The center of the obverse is surrounded by a wreath bearing the King's monogram, GV, at its base. The wreath encloses a scroll inscribed 1914, with smaller scrolls, one above and one below, bearing AUG and NOV respectively.

The reverse is plain and contains the recipient's number, rank, name and regiment in three lines of small impressed capitals. The ribbon is of watered red, white and blue.

The 1914-15 Star

After the regulations affecting the 1914 star had been framed, it was decided to award a similar star, suitably dated to those who served before 1916. The star was awarded to all those who saw service in any theater of war between August 5, 1914 and December 31, 1915, except those who served with British Expeditionary Force and therefore were entitled to the 1914 star. Thus, a sailor who was killed at sea in August 1914 would be entitled to the 1914-15 star and not the 1914 star because he hadn't actually served in France or Belgium.

The star is identical to the 1914 star except that the central scroll reads 1914-15 and the AUG and NOV scrolls are omitted. Nearly 2,350,000 stars were issued, for service in France, the Dardanelles, East and West Africa, New Guinea, and several smaller theaters of war. The ribbon is identical to the 1914 star.

The War Medal

The 1914 Star *The 1914–15 Star*

The common reverse is a plain field which is individually inscribed.

The War Medal

The British War Medal was awarded to all officers and men who left their native shores in any part of the British Empire, whether they later entered a theater of war or not. Men who left the United Kingdom to serve in any part of the Empire and men from the Dominions who came to the UK but did not go on to serve in Europe were therefore equally entitled to this medal.[2]

At first, the War Medals Committee desired to issue a separate medal for each theater of war.[3] However, as several hundred thousand men served in more than one theater of war, this proposal was abandoned. The committee also appointed a secondary committee to examine the possibility of battle clasps, and in 1920, the final proposals were actually approved by H.M. The King and printed in an Admiralty order of 1920.[4] This listed 49 actions for which clasps had been approved.[5] The idea was eventually shelved on account of the tremendous cost.

The medal that was issued is silver and hangs from a straight, non-swivelling suspender. The obverse bears the coinage head of His Majesty, *i.e.* his left facing bust, GEORGIVS V BRITT: OMN: REX ET IND: IMP around. The initials of the designer, Bertram Mackennal, appear on the truncation of the bust.

The reverse was designed by William McMillan, who served in France in the early part of the war but was discharged with shell shock. McMillan's design was chosen from among 51 drawings submitted to a committee consisting of representatives of the Royal Academy, the Royal Society of British Sculptors, The British Museum, the National Gallery and the Royal Mint.[6] McMillan received £500 for his design.[7]

The medal's reverse shows St. George on horseback trampling the eagle shield of the Central Powers and a skull and crossbones. Above St. George is the risen sun of victory and the dates 1914-1918, though the medal could be won for service as late as 1920, chiefly minesweeping in the the North Sea.

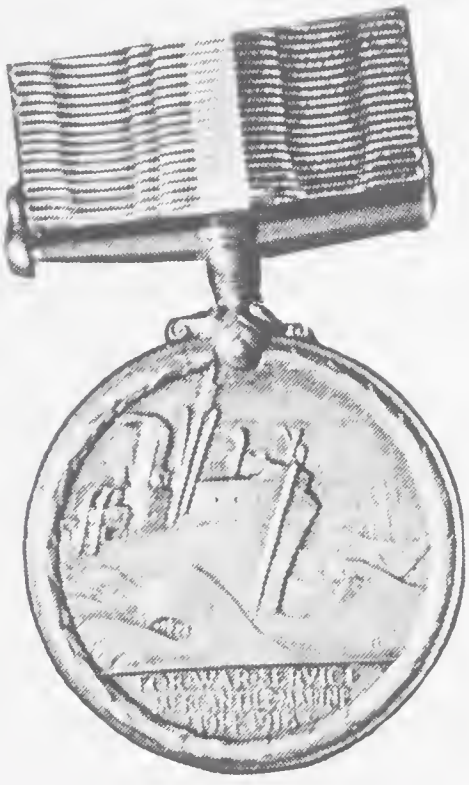
The recipient's number, rank, name and regiment appear in small impressed capitals on the rim. The ribbon has a broad central stripe of orange, bordered on each side by stripes of white, black and blue. Five and a half million of these War Medals were issued.

The Mercantile Marine Medal

This bronze medal was issued by the Board of Trade to members of the Mercantile Marine, the British merchant fleet, for service during the Great War. The medal was awarded to members of the British, Dominion, Colonial and Indian Mercantile Marine who served at least one voyage through a danger zone.

The obverse of the medal bears the coinage bust of King George V by Bertram Mackennal, identical to the obverse of the British War Medal. The reverse, designed by H. Stabler,[8] depicts a merchant steamer plowing through a stormy sea with a sailing ship in the distance and a sinking U-Boat in the right foreground. The exergue is inscribed FOR WAR SERVICE MERCANTILE MARINE 1914-1918 in three lines. The entire reverse is surrounded by a laurel wreath.

The medal was awarded to 133,000 individuals, each named to its recipient in large, impressed capitals on the rim. The medal hangs from a straight, non-swivelling suspender similar to that on the War Medal. The ribbon is red and green with a thin white stripe down the middle. These colors are symbolic of the port, starboard and headlights of a vessel.



Mercantile Marine Medal *Territorial Forces Medal*

The common obverse is identical to The War Medal

The Victory Medal

The Territorial Forces War Medal

To qualify for this bronze medal, one had to be a member of the Territorial Force serving on August 4, 1914, or an ex-member of the force who had served for not less than four years before the war and rejoined the force before September 30, 1914, and not entitled to the 1914 or 1914-15 star.[9]

Only 34,000 medals were issued, making it the scarcest medal for the Great War. The obverse is the same as the Mercantile Marine and War Medals, i.e. the coinage head of H.M. The King. The reverse reads in five lines, FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS 1914-19 within a wreath, TERRITORIAL WAR MEDAL around the outside of the wreath. The date on the wreath has nothing to do with the qualifying date for the award. The medal recipient is always named in small impressed capitals on the rim.

The medal hangs from a suspender identical to the War Medal and Mercantile Marine Medal suspenders. The ribbon is watered yellow with a green vertical stripe, 4.5mm wide, a similar distance from each edge.

The Victory Medal

At a meeting of representatives of all the Associated Powers held in Paris in March, 1919, the following recommendations were put forward:[10]

1. A medal of the Great War will be instituted and called the Victory Medal.

2. This medal will be distributed on principles to be decided by each Government.

3. The ribbon shall be identical for all the countries, and will consist of two rainbows joined by red in the center.

4. the medal will be round, 36 mm in diameter, and made of bronze.

5. Each country shall have its own artist design the medal upon the following lines:

a. On the obverse will be a winged figure of Victory, full length in the middle of the medal, and full face.

b. On the reverse there will be an inscription, "The Great War for Civilisation," translated into the different languages.

After the Allied Governments agreed on this proposal, the distribution of the medals to the British troops was discussed. As regards the army, it was decided to award the medal to the officers and men who had entered a theater of war with any military unit. In the Navy, the prerequisite for receipt of the award was simply service afloat after August 5, 1914 and before the Armistice, November 11, 1918. Similarly, any member of the Royal Air Force who served in the air was entitled to the award.[11] In all, 5,750,000 British Victory Medals were distributed.

The British Victory Medal was designed by William McMillan, who also designed the War Medal. The Victory medal design followed the specifications set forth above, except for the addition of the dates, 1914-1919 and a wreath on the reverse. The double rainbow ribbon is strung through a half-inch diameter ring which is held by a small loop sweated to the medal. Naming is in faint, impressed capitals on the rim.

APPENDIX: TECHNICAL INFORMATION ON MEDALS

The 1914 Star
Metal: Bronze
Dimensions: 45 x 63mm
Naming: Impressed capitals on rev.
Suspension: 1/2-inch ring at top of star
Ribbon: watered red, white & blue
Mintage: approx. 2,350,000

The 1914-15 Star
Metal: Bronze
Dimensions: 45 x 63mm
Naming: Impressed capitals on rev.
Suspension: 1/2-inch ring at top of star
Ribbon: watered red, white & blue
Mintage: approx. 378,000

The War Medal
Metal/diameter: 36mm Silver
Designer: William McMillan
Naming: Impressed capitals on rim.
Suspension: straight non-swivelling
Ribbon: central stripe of orange, bordered by stripes of white, black and blue
Mintage: approx. 5,500,000

The Mercatile Marine Medal
Metal/diameter: 36mm Bronze
Designer: H. Stabler
Naming: Impressed capitals on rim.
Suspension: straight non-swivelling
Ribbon: red and green with central thin white stripe
Mintage: approx. 133,000

Territorial Forces War Medal
Metal/diameter: 36mm Bronze
Naming: Impressed capitals on rim.
Suspension: straight non-swivelling
Ribbon: yellow with 2 smaller green stripes
Mintage: approx. 32,000

The Victory Medal
Metal/diameter: 36mm Bronze
Designer: William McMillan
Naming: Impressed capitals on rim.
Suspension: 1/2-inch ring in loop at top
Ribbon: 2 rainbows joined by red center
Mintage: approx. 5,750,000

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FOOTNOTES:

1. Johnson, page 169.
2. Report of the Committee to Consider the Question of War Medals, 1919. (Johnson, page 177.
3. Ibid.
4. Gould, page 58.
5. Ibid.
6. Johnson, p. 172.
7. Ibid.
8. Greenwich, page 224.
9. Johnson, page 180.
10. Committee, etc. (Johnson, page 179).
11. Ibid

THE SYNGRAPHICS SCENE

- BY KEN BARR -

Illegal Syngraphic Collections

There is no need to panic. Reading this column will not put you at risk of incarceration. Collecting the items mentioned below, however, will put part of your collection at risk of confiscation, and possibly your person at risk of fine and/or imprisonment. Additionally, given the litigious nature of our current society, it is clearly stated here that neither the columnist, the editor nor any officer or member of the Society condones or encourages the collecting of any items described below.

Most numismatists know of the items that they are legally not allowed to collect. Obvious items such as counterfeit coins, plus less obvious items like the 1933 $20 St. Gaudens gold piece ("never officially released for circulation"), the 1964 Peace dollar and the pattern aluminum cents of the mid 1970's are all subject to confiscation if offered for sale at a public show or via an auction. Syngraphists, on the other hand, have a much more difficult time in determining which items will or will not put them at risk.

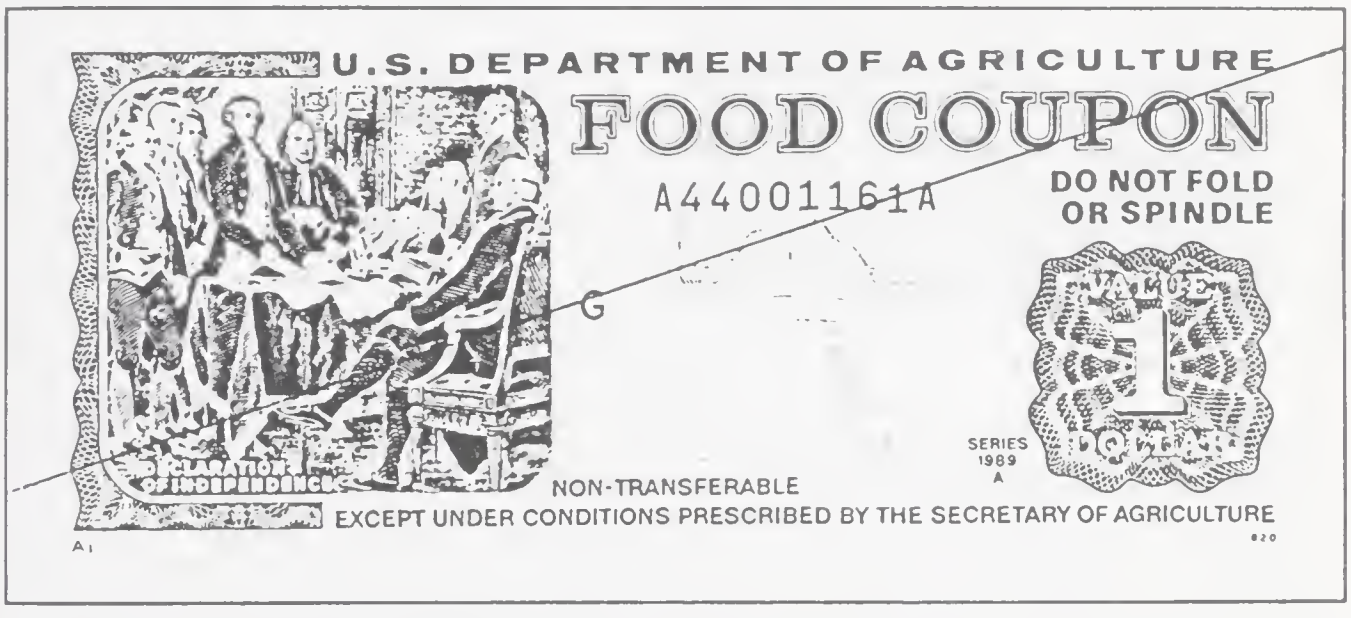
The only truly obvious "forbidden fruit" is counterfeit federal currency (1862 to date). Despite this, counterfeit National Bank Notes (most often 1865 "Lazy Deuce" $2's from the St. Nicholas National Bank of New York) are frequently offered for sale at shows, and even listed in advertisements in national publications such as the *Bank Note Reporter*. Law enforcement in this area tends to focus only on the fraudulent sale of counterfeits. If both the buyer and seller know the note is bogus, and the price paid is greater than the face value of the note, there is a low probability that the buyer will attempt to "pass" the note in circulation. This is especially true of large size notes, which have not circulated for decades. It is suspected that any sale of counterfeit small size notes would result in a much higher level of interest by the Secret Service.

One especially interesting item that straddles the line between legal and illegal is the "Million Dollar Bill" offered by the International Association of Millionaires. This fantasy "note," printed by the American Bank Note Company in full intaglio with several counterfeit deterrent features, is legal to own in most of the United States. In the Chicago area, however, several of these notes were seized by the Secret Service at the 1991 ANA Convention. The seizure was upheld by that district's federal district court. At present, this is the only district to have even attempted such an action, the other district offices declining to pursue the matter.

A similar governmental sleight of hand took place with gold certificates. As a result of the Gold Reserve Act of 1934, all series 1928 gold certificates were recalled by the Treasury. While gold coins had some degree of leeway in that numismatic coins "having a recognized special value to collectors of rare and unusual coins" were partially exempted, syngraphists of the period had no such stated loophole for these small size notes. There appears to have been

a rather lax enforcement of this requirement, however, as major auctions after that date continued to list these notes . The Grinnell sales of 1944-1946 listed a complete denomination set in part VII (November 30, 1946), for example. Collecting of these notes became officially legal again with the lifting of the ban by Treasury Secretary C. Douglas Dillon on April 24, 1964. Fortunately for syngraphists of today, not all collectors in the 1934-1964 time frame followed this government edict, preferring to illicitly collect and preserve these important fiscal documents for future generations.

Several other items of considerable interest to syngraphists are illegal to own in all areas of the country. The most obvious are "food stamps," or "food coupons." The first issues were in stamp format between 1939 and 1943, issued either by the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation (FSCC) or the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The modern program, in coupon format, started in 1961 and continues today. Twenty-five cent and one dollar coupons were issued in 1961, with a five dollar denomination added in 1970 and a ten dollar denomination in 1975. Since this is fiscally accountable paper, replacement coupons must be produced for those coupons discovered to be damaged during the inspection process. Until 1977, replacements were indicated by deleting the serial number suffix letter (as done for Military Payment Certificates), with current coupons using the standard "star" to replace the serial number prefix letter, similar to small size currency.



Syngraphists are especially interested in the "bicentennial designs" introduced by the United States Bank Note Corporation in 1975 and still in general use today. Many of the vignettes are quite attractive and historically significant. It is truly a shame that these beautiful syngraphic gems have to be hidden in a covert collection. Interestingly, it is legal to collect the food coupon booklet covers, which are also printed by the security printers (BEP, USBNC or ABNCo., whichever made the enclosed coupons). These covers are also serially numbered, with only a few "replacement covers" known to exist.

A final item with a checkered past is the Department of Energy "Gas Ration Coupon" of the early 1970s. These were originally designed and produced in anticipation of nationwide gasoline rationing during the Arab oil embargo. Several million were printed, but not serially numbered, and put in a warehouse awaiting future use. The crisis passed, however, and these items were not required. After paying storage costs for several years, the government eventually ordered them destroyed. Since there was a portrait of George

Washington on each coupon that could be used to defraud a dollar bill change-making machine, these were to be shredded and disposed of in a secure landfill by a bonded disposal service.

Some months later, of course, several individual pieces were discovered at a Colorado Springs flea market and traded hands at a low price. Since then, a few partial sheets have also turned up, and have traded hands for considerably higher values. It is unknown how many of these coupons were "liberated" from the destruction process, but it is this columnist's opinion that less than 100 pieces exist today, unless of course there is a pallet or two of unopened boxes hidden away in some truck driver's garage in Colorado. All are subject to confiscation, but there is no criminal penalty for possession.

Each collector is individually responsible for defining the limits and parameters of his or her own collection. Following the letter of the law is the required course for some collectors, while others take a more relaxed "what's the harm?" atttitude. Today's illicit collectors of food coupons and gas ration coupons may be looked upon by future generations in a kindly light, as often are the past illicit collectors of gold certificates by today's syngraphists. With appropriate legal disclaimers, to each his or her own....

REFERENCES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

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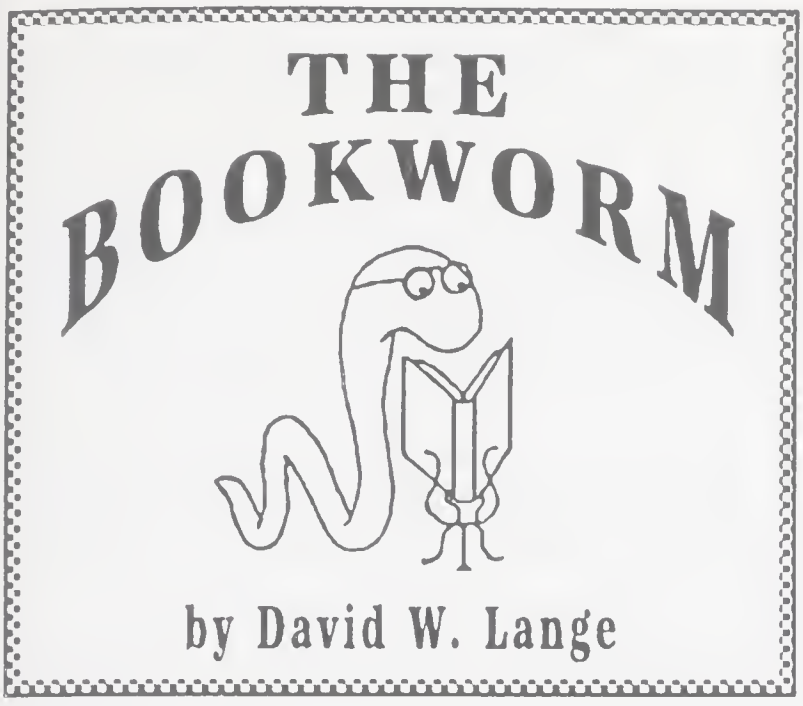

The Complete Guide to Walking Liberty Half Dollars

We numismatists seem to live in the age of speciality books. This is welcomed by most collectors, as books enable us to experience vicariously the thrill of owning rare and high grade coins which, in reality, are well beyond our means. In this vein, the latest title to come across my desk is yet another volume from the prolific partnership of DLRC Press. *The Complete Guide to Walking Liberty Half Dollars* will not disappoint fans of the "Complete Guide" series, which began in 1989 with standard format books on the Barber silver series, Seated Liberty coins and even, I'm told, Buffalo Nickels.

This latest entry was penned by Bruce Fox, an engineer for Northrop Corporation by day and owner of Golden West Numismatics, a part-time coin business. Bruce has specialized in the Walking Liberty Half Dollars series for some years, and he draws on his experience with these coins in guiding the reader. Presented are thorough treatments of the series' design and history, a profile of designer/sculptor Adolph A. Weinman, and an inviting selection of pattern coins. Minor modifications to the basic design which occurred after its introduction in 1916 are also highlighted, along with some notable differences in mintmark style during 1917.

One feature which would have enlivened the history chapter even further is a photo or two of the artist's model. Elsie Kachel Stevens is known to have posed for Weinman in 1913, and her portrait is easily recognizable on Weinman's dime, also introduced in 1916. It may be supposed that the full figure of Liberty appearing on the half dollar is derived from the same source, as her head is clearly similar in portrayal to that on the dime, sans wings. Some mention of this connection should have been included for the sake of completeness.

Fox's treatment of counterfeit coins is brief but instructive. A few major error coins are included, these rarely seen in the marketplace. The reader is left desiring more of these amazing items, and it is hoped that continued searching for additional error coins will enrich a future, revised edition.

Another amusing feature is the chapter on alterations and novelty items. The most interesting of these, by far, is a half dollar cut into three sections, vertically, and given a grooved edge. A rubber band placed around the edge and within this groove permits the three sections of the coin to be partially collapsed while remaining together. This enables the person manipulating the coin to slip it through the opening of a bottle. If skillfully performed, viewers are amazed to see the half dollar piece navigate a passage which is clearly

smaller than the coin's diameter.

As with other books in the "Complete Guide" series, the greater part is devoted to a date and mint analysis of the subject coin. If surveyed, it is likely that purchasers of these books would name this feature as their primary interest in obtaining a particular title. Bruce Fox has done a fine job in creating a feel for the characteristics of each date/mint combination. Quality of strike, rarity and known varieties are all detailed. A novel feature of this latest entry in the series is the inclusion of bar graphs showing the number of certified mint state coins by grade. This data is taken from the cumulative totals found within the periodical reports issued by the PCGS, the NGC and ANACS.

The emphasis placed on such information is, perhaps, inescapable in this era of encapsulated coins. Although this writer's personal prejudice is in favor of less investment analysis and more collector oriented information, it is fair to say that all parties will be reasonably satisfied by Fox's presentation. More variety photos are desirable in such a work, if only for the sake of entertainment.

All in all, *The Complete Guide to Walking Liberty Half Dollars* is a welcome addition to the evergrowing list of speciality works on United States coinage. Copies may be found at some coin shops, or you can order directly from the author: Golden West Numismatics, 16787 Beach Boulevard, Huntington Beach, CA 92647. The softcover edition sells for $29.95, hardcover books are $49.95. Include $3.50 postage with all orders.

A Notice in the *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, June 3, 1854

"The New Three-Dollar Gold Coin.—Wells, Fargo & Co. exhibited yesterday the new three-dollar United States gold piece, just issued by the United States Mint at Philadelphia. The new coin is a trifle smaller than the French twenty-franc piece. The face of the coin has the usual female head on American coin, with the word "Liberty" in the head band, the whole surmounted by a tuft of feathers such as are usual in the decoration of Indian princesses. The words "United States of America" encircle the head. The reverse shows an elaborate wreath with an intricate combination, which encloses the figure "3," the word "dollars" and "1854" coming beneath. The piece is plain, neat and decidedly handsome."

P.G.&E. TRANSPORTATION TOKENS

BY BRIAN KESTNER

Believe it or not, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) was in the transportation business at one time. PG&E owned the streetcar system in Sacramento from October 1905 to October 31, 1943.

In 1887, the Sacramento Railway and Improvement Company established the Sacramento Street Railway. In 1889, eight acres were developed in the southeastern part of town as an amusement park, known as Oak Park, to promote streetcar travel. Through a series of mergers, the railway system and the amusement park became part of the Sacramento Electric, Gas & Railway Company.

In October 1905, the Sacramento Electric, Gas & Railway Company was merged into PG&E. As part of the merger, PG&E acquired the streetcars and Oak Park, the amusement center. The park was acquired by the McClatchy family who donated it to the city of Sacramento in 1923.

PG & E Token for Streetcar Fare

PG&E issued three different types of tokens, two full fares and one half fare. One of the full fares, the rarest of the three, has the design of a streetcar on it. The other full fare is about the size of a cent and has a triangle cut in the center of it. The obverse, around the outer edge, reads "Pacific Gas & Electric Co."; the reverse reads "good for one fare". The half fare token is about the size of a quarter and also has a triangle cut into the center of it. The obverse says "Pacific Gas & Electric Co.", while the reverse says "good for one half fare". Some of the PG&E tokens were known to have been used on the San Francisco Municipal Railway System, a practice that certainly was not encouraged by the railway system.

On November 1, 1943, the transportation system of 33 streetcars and 60 buses was sold to the Sacramento City Lines, and PG&E was no longer in the transportation business. Later, the City of Sacramento took over the transportation system from the Sacramento City Lines.

Oak Park is now primarily an area of homes. The streetcars as well as the roller coaster of Oak Park have vanished but are still cherished memories of many old-timers in Sacramento.

by Jerry F. Schimmel

SAN FRANCISCO'S ABERRATION

A tee-totalling dance hall was a strange thing in 1890. Woven into civilization's web were more than 3000 legal watering holes, one for every hundred men, women, children and infants. Licensed premises ranged from chandeliered hotel salons like the Palace Hotel Bar to clapboard shacks on the waterfront, from sweaty dance halls at Kearny and Pacific Streets to the Sample Rooms of genteel neighborhood groceries. Unlicensed "blind pigs" were never counted. Everyone knew where to find them except the cops. There were other amenities available to citizens like cable railways and graft-ridden machine politics.

It had been a single man's town and he lived in rooming houses or working men's flea traps. Sailors, miners and loggers swelled his numbers as conditions dictated. If they were not bachelors in reality, they usually were in spirit. Tastes in amusement were not complicated. Nighttime required a bottle to get started. A companion or crap game would provide a rounded experience. Women of any age, race, background, experience, ability or nuptial status had always been desperately few, but by the '90s there were more families. Social expectations formed in the Midwest and South were taking hold. Rowdiness left over from the Gold Rush survived in several urban pockets, mostly around the Barbary Coast and Uptown Tenderloin. Out-of-town business men and new residents did not like the old ways. The Anti-Saloon League was flexing its political muscle to do away with all practitioners of immorality.

Two-sixteen Grant Avenue was a second-floor downtown dance hall. Below it was the California Athletic Club. Both stood on the northeast corner of tiny Ashburton Alley a few doors from Sutter Street. Across that small lane sat the Pacific Club, a gentlemen's association. The O'Connor Moffat and Samuels Dry Goods firms were less than a block away. The San Francisco Verein was next door on the corner of Post Street. Like most German societies the latter was involved in athletics and must have had ties to the outfit downstairs. Facing Sutter Street on the southwest corner was the California Supreme Court building. Grant Avenue between Market and Bush streets had been re-named for the President and ex-general only four years before. The remaining section of Dupont Street would change in 1908.

From 1890 to 1898 Nils R. Holmquist ran the hall. A carriage painter on Mission Street until 1889, he lived at Monterey House on Market Street, Mrs. N.R. Holmquist, Proprietor. Like some places in the U.S. and Europe, it may have been a temperance hotel, but listings make no mention of that fact. Maybe he was a member of the gym club downstairs. It was for men only, but its members were not the kind to carry on after hours like sailors on shore leave. "Nice girls" of chaste reputation were their first choice, ones toward whom they could have honorable intentions, whatever else they may have had going. Holmquist saw their need and met it. His ad appeared in the 1891 Mechanics Fair program, "The Only Temperance Dance Hall In The City." It depicts a dancing couple in evening dress, an image with appeal to the new middle classes.

Mixed with nearby government and commerce were several sources of fun. Morton Street (now Maiden Lane) was a block away, solid door-to-door brothels for two blocks, flanked on the corners by saloons. Berry Street (now Harlan Place), a block north, was shorter, but a not dissimilar venue. The Midway Plaisance across Market Street booked the best hootchy kootchy dancers, Ten Cents Admission. The Barbary Coast, ten blocks away, was a beacon to those for whom temperance was a major sin. Percentage girls worked there long hours to make sure that it was never committed. Given the relaxed standards common to many of the city's recreation facilities, Holmquist should have received a commendation for effort and good intentions.

He advertised his employees as "Ladies With Good Habits." Dance hall girls did not have the best of reputations. Their ability to extract money f rom credulous, intoxicated male celebrants was legendary. Career opportunities for poor and uneducated women in those days were limited pretty much to housewife, live-in domestic or laundry girl. California had no textile mills like those in New England that provided honest though exploitative earnings. Dance hall work had few intellectual prerequisites. It was also fun—at least in the beginning. When applying to Holmquist a woman probably did not tell him if she had any special proclivities. He may not have cared, especially if she had any acting skills.

In 1895 his hall appeared in the lisings under **"Liquors - Retail"**—the directory compiler's euphemism for saloonkeepers. He had moved to furnished lodgings across the street at 217. This was a dubious establishment with connections to a bar owner and macquereau named Billy Abbott. Abbott was later shot down in the street by Miss Rene Adams who claimed that he first ruined her, then left her for someone else. No trace of Mrs. Holmquist could be found. The temptation of **akvavit** might have accounted for our Scandinavian's new classification. Executive retreats for overworked businessmen did not exist. Twelve-step meetings would not convene for forty years. If alcohol was his problem, it is one with which he had to live or die. The middle 1890s were hard times and a more likely explanation for his policy change. Tea, sarsaparilla and ladies with good habits were losing their appeal. Holmquist was losing money. Booze and bad girls were a better bet to keep bank balances in black ink.

The Spanish-American War and Alaska Gold Rush revived the city by

1899. Troopers and Swabbies on their way to and from the Phillipines and a new generation of miners were lining up for San Francisco's good times. The brothels on Morton and Berry streets were just about closed by businesses and reformers. Holmquist was doing well and had moved uptown into the theatre district. His new place was another second floor at 35 Eddy Street just off Mason Street. On the corners were Blanco and Brun's Poodle Dog, the Tivoli Opera House and the Olympia Concert Hall. At Market and Turk streets the Thalia Cafe festered in raucous suppuration.

The new premises stood on a triangle-shaped block bounded by Eddy, Market and Mason streets. Adjacent were a potpourri of enterprises including a Grand Army of The Republic lodge hall (upstairs), the McGinn Brothers Undertakers a few doors down Eddy Street, lodgings, offices, small stores, a couple of restaurants, fifteen saloons and two whorehouses. The cable car turntable at Powell and Market streets had been revolving for better than a dozen years. After 1901 Holmquist drops from sight.

His brass tallies are 23mm in diameter (⅞ inch), strictly utilitarian and state simply **216 GRANT AVE., GOOD FOR 5¢ DRINK.** A man wanting to dance had to buy drinks for himself and his partner, dancing included. A woman's job was getting the men to buy. She received a token for every drink sold. At the end of her shift the checks were counted and a split made. Holmquist's chits were made between 1895 and '98 after he had started serving liquor. Surviving specimens are stained and worn.

Today the Grant Avenue hall site is Malm Luggage at the sidewalk level. The upper floors house an art gallery. Ashburton Alley is spotlessly clean with freshly painted walls and loading bays. Unblemished scavenger receptacles stand on immaculate blacktop. The names "Ashburton Ave" and "Grant Ave" are situated in pretentious gilt letters over an ornate entry to the law offices at number 214. Candy and jewellery boutiques are polished and smug in apparent affluence. Chic passers-by exude success and self-confidence.

The 35 Eddy Street location is now Tina's Restaurant and the Bristol Hotel. They overlook a boarded-up intersection reminiscent of Beirut after a street battle. Cops warily patrol the daytime sidewalks in threes. Grimy men in smelly doorways hail them with alcohol-slurred voices. On Mason Street peepshow and porn movie marquees glitter and beckon unaffected by the surroundings.

The east half of the old triangle block was bulldozed in the 1960s when Cyril Magnin Way and Hallidie Plaza were opened.

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(explaining his request for music lessons on the day before his execution)

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